

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 232 680

IR 050 325

TITLE Guidelines for the Compilation of Union Catalogues of Serials.
INSTITUTION International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, London (England).
SPONS AGENCY United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
REPORT NO PGI-83/WS/1
PUB DATE Dec 82
NOTE 34p.; Best copy available.
PUE TYPE Guides - General (050)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Check Lists; Citations (References); Filing; *Library Cooperation; Library Planning; Program Administration; *Program Development; Program Implementation; *Serials; Shared Services; *Union Catalogs

ABSTRACT

Intended for use in countries planning the establishment of new union catalogs, as well as in countries with long established traditions of library resource sharing, this document provides guiding principles and outlines standard methods and practices for the compilation of union catalogs of serials. Following definitions of relevant terminology and a discussion of the objectives, uses, and characteristics of union catalogs, guidelines are given in six areas: (1) the decision to establish a union catalog, including assessment of the general circumstances and the financial and technical resources available; (2) the establishment of the catalog, including aspects of policy, content, the legislative framework, and available resources; (3) organization and management of the catalog, particularly the responsibilities of an editorial center; (4) the content of bibliographic records, including both bibliographic and holding/lending information; (5) catalog compilation and maintenance, including its arrangement, access points, and filing system; and (6) production and publication of the catalog in printed, microform, or computerized format. A brief note on the updating of union catalogs and a list of 18 references conclude the publication. (ESR)

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PGI-83/WS/1

Paris, December 1982

Original: English

GUIDELINES FOR THE COMPILATION OF
UNION CATALOGUES OF SERIALS

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Recommended catalogue entry:

Guidelines for the compilation of union catalogues of serials.-
Paris : Unesco : IFLA, 1982.- iv, 29p. ; 30 cm.- (PGI-83/WS/1)

- I Unesco. General Information Programme and UNISIST
- II International Federation of Library Associations and
Institutions (IFLA)

FOREWORD

These Unesco *Guidelines for the compilation of union catalogues of serials* were prepared by an ad hoc Group as a result of a contract between Unesco and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), on behalf of its Section on Serial Publications. They are based to a large extent on a study carried out under an earlier Unesco/IFLA contract by Jean Whiffin,⁽¹⁾ who also contributed to the work of the ad hoc Group.

In accordance with general IFLA practice, the draft text prepared by Jean Whiffin, which in itself was compiled after examination of more than two hundred union catalogues of serials, was circulated worldwide by the IFLA Section on Serial Publications for comment over a period of six months. The comments received were constructive and wide-ranging, with organizations in a number of countries undertaking an extensive examination and review of Miss Whiffin's text. The ad hoc Group had, therefore, the advantage in preparing the *Guidelines* to suit Unesco's requirements, not only of Miss Whiffin's detailed document but also of the comments received on that text. In addition, the ad hoc Group, as background information, consulted other relevant publications including studies⁽²⁾ prepared for the Unesco/IFLA International Congress on UAP (Universal Availability of Publications), May 1982.

In accordance with the Unesco contract, the ad hoc Group included representatives from the International Serials Data System International Centre, NOSP (Nordisk Samkatalog over periodika), the IFLA International Office for UAP, the IFLA International Office for UBC, as well as members of the Standing Committee of the IFLA Section on Serial Publications. The ad hoc Group met three times, in February 1981 and June 1982 in London, and in August 1982 in Montreal. The draft text, available for the Group in Montreal, was thereafter revised with the major task of editing undertaken by Barbara Jover, Bibliographic Assistant, IFLA International Office for UBC.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE COMPILATION OF UNION CATALOGUES OF SERIALS

Introduction

Union catalogues are the traditional means by which libraries make their holdings known and accessible outside their own community. Their major function has been to facilitate access to library collections by resource sharing and co-operation among several service points, either within a single institution or among a number of libraries which are separately managed and administered.

Resource sharing, together with ready access to documents, becomes more important as the amount of information published in one or other form increases. Indeed, there sometimes appears to be an inverse ratio between the amount of information published and the extent of the resources available to acquire, house, maintain and adequately service it. Hence the capability not only to list but also to locate published information has become necessarily a major preoccupation of libraries. Furthermore, at a time when special libraries and other information services are being created in order to cope with increasing specialization of knowledge, general libraries are still expected to be able to direct users to the more specialized literature.

The problems are not only economic but also practical, as the means of communication become more complex. The flow of information is uneven, with a variety of levels of circulation at the publishers' disposal; for example, in the case of serials, such distinctions as controlled circulation, "members only" availability, differential subscriptions for libraries *vis-à-vis* individuals.

There are also the various physical forms in which information is now available, such as computer tape, microform, videodisc, viewdata. In this complex situation the librarian and the user both search for information. Union catalogues are one means by which a library or a group of libraries can share collections, thereby assisting the sensible spending of scarce financial resources, and ensuring that library users have access to a larger number of documents than is usually available at a single library site.

It was clearly established in the course of the IFLA project which served as the basis for these *Guidelines* that many existing union catalogues of serials are providing inadequate service, at least when measured against present needs. As published documentation grows, the recording of its availability must be up-dated more rapidly than hitherto, so other-than-traditional print means of publication of union catalogues are being explored. Moreover, developments in computing and telecommunications mean that catalogue maintenance, although still a problem, can be facilitated, while another aspect of communications, namely the ease with which union catalogue users can gain access to collections of serials in other countries or continents, or indeed travel to those countries in order to consult serials at first hand, has transformed academic research. But while there may exist a degree of homogeneity in the format of union catalogues of serials in one country, this homogeneity may disappear entirely elsewhere in the world and result in less-than-effective use of serial collections. These factors together indicate the importance of greater standardization of practices in the compilation of union catalogues, recognizing at the same time that there will also be a variety of styles of the union catalogue in relation to environment, requirements and resources.

These Unesco *Guidelines*, by providing guiding principles and outlining standard methods and practices for the compilation of union catalogues of serials, are intended to aid the wider and more efficient use of library collections and the more effective management of limited or diminishing library resources. They are intended to have relevance to library practices in all countries in the development of one of the basic tools of serial control and availability; and to give practical guidance on the establishment and operation of union catalogues of serials and their management and administrative structure.

It is anticipated that the *Guidelines*, in presenting a practical framework for the operation of union catalogues of serials, will have particular value in countries planning the establishment of new union catalogues. In other countries, with long established traditions of resource sharing among libraries, the proposals in the *Guidelines*, though not so immediately relevant, may suggest practical ways in which the contents, coverage and effectiveness of existing union catalogues can be upgraded, hence contributing to the improvement of national tools of serial control and availability.

The *Guidelines* are limited to one particular aspect of serial control and availability, but, as Unesco guidelines, belong to a group of other publications emanating from the General Information Programme of Unesco dealing with the development of normative tools for the processing and transfer of information. To some extent the *Guidelines* can be seen as an adjunct of the *Guidelines for the national bibliographic agency and the national bibliography*,⁽³⁾ which, as the product of the 1977 International Congress on National Bibliographies, were concerned most directly with the major national tool of bibliographic control, the national bibliography. There is also a close relationship between the *Guidelines* and the programme of Universal Availability of Publications (UAP), and, as noted in the discussions at the Unesco/IFLA International Congress on UAP, May 1982, the establishment of union catalogues can be seen as one national step in the promotion of UAP. At another level, there is the relationship between these *Guidelines* and the promotion and use of compatible international information services and systems, such as the International Serials Data System.

1 The nature of the union catalogue

1.1 Definitions and terminology

For the purpose of these *Guidelines*, a union catalogue of serials is defined as:

"A catalogue based on two or more collections, either in different institutions, or in different libraries in the same institution, provided through the medium of print, microform or computerized data-base. It gives, appended to one bibliographic record for each discrete serial, the location and summarized holdings data of the respective collections of the participating institution(s). The records may be in one or more orders of arrangement. In accordance with agreed policy, each participant may report the entire records of its collection or may select records, for example, by subject or media."

The definition given above can apply equally to a union list of serials and the two terms *union catalogue* and *union list* can be considered as generic terms for the same bibliographic tool. The term *union catalogue* has been selected for use throughout the *Guidelines*.

Serial is defined in ISO 3297-1975, *International Standard Serial Numbering (ISSN)* (4) as

"A publication, in printed form or not, issued in successive parts usually having numerical or chronological designations and intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include periodicals, newspapers, annuals (reports, yearbooks, directories, etc.), the journals, memoirs, proceedings, transactions, etc., of societies, and monographic series.

Note - This definition does not include works produced in parts for a period predetermined as finite."

The expanded definition provided in British Standard BS 5408-1976, *Glossary of documentation terms* (5) is also useful:

"A publication consisting of a number of separate and successive parts having a constant title and being designed for consecutive issue at intervals over an indefinite period of time and an indefinite numbers of parts. The term embraces periodicals and series; generally also those types of publication such as yearbooks, almanacs and some directories, in which the successive parts are essentially revised or updated editions of the preceding parts, published at relatively frequent or regular intervals; and those types of continuation which are periodic supplements to a single (usually encyclopaedic) work and are designed to amend or update the text of the single work."

This is not to suggest, however, that all types of serials need necessarily be included in a union catalogue, but rather that in establishing a policy of coverage for the union catalogue, agreement on the categories of serials to be included or excluded can be based on the definitions given above.

It should also be recognized that the incorporation of certain categories of serial material into a union catalogue which is to be arranged alphabetically will present problems. Newspapers and official publications

are types of serials which may be arranged more usefully geographically or by political jurisdiction (see 6.1.1).

In these *Guidelines* the following terms are used:

<i>participants</i> <i>participating libraries</i>	The members of the group of libraries or institutions contributing records of their serial collections to the union catalogue.
<i>user</i>	The individual borrower who makes use of the services of the union catalogue.
<i>editorial centre</i>	The office or institution responsible for the operational aspects of the union catalogue.
<i>project director</i>	head of editorial centre with responsibility for the management of the union catalogue.
<i>access point</i>	A name, term, code under which a bibliographic record may be searched and identified.

Technical terms are explained when they are first used in the text; for example, *derived cataloguing*.

1.2 Objective

The objective of the union catalogue is to facilitate access to serial collections, thereby making the maximum use of resources. In order to facilitate access the union catalogue provides the necessary information to:

- identify and locate known titles of serials;
- record holdings (e.g. volumes and issues of each serial in the possession of each participant);
- indicate the availability of volumes and issues (e.g. restricted loan, photocopying).

In addition to locating known titles, some union catalogues are arranged in sequences which reflect specific characteristics (e.g. in a classified order) as an aid to the user in speculative searches.

A subsidiary function of the union catalogue, consequent upon the cumulation of information in the catalogue, is as an aid to library management.

1.2.1 Access to serials

Access to serial collections by consultation of the union catalogue typically follows this pattern:

- the individual user not finding a specific part of a serial in his own library submits a loan request to his library stating whether he wants to borrow the original or receive a photocopy;

- the library identifies the serial title in the union catalogue;
- it consults the holdings of the participating libraries reporting possession of this title and matches the request to the lending policies of the libraries;
- it forwards the request to one of the participating libraries, often listing 2nd or 3rd choice libraries on the request form;
- the 1st choice library consults its stock and effects the loan; when the library cannot comply with the request because the item is on loan, lost or disposed of, the request will be returned or circulated to other libraries in an order that is predetermined by the requesting library until satisfied;
- alternatively, the user may be directed to visit a participating library to consult the serial there. This is especially likely when the user wishes to consult a run (i.e. consecutive issues over a period) of a serial title.

1.2.2 Aid to library management

- *Acquisition policy* The union catalogue, by revealing the number of libraries possessing a given serial title and the extent of their holdings or by indicating the subject specialization among a group of libraries, can assist a library in determining its acquisition policy; for example, in deciding on new subscriptions, on the disposal of back issues; or as the basis for a co-operative acquisition policy with the other participants (see 2.1);
- *Is a bibliographic tool* The record of each serial in the union catalogue includes information related to the bibliographic history of the serial; for example, previous or subsequent titles, its relationship to other serials.

When the entries in the union catalogue are arranged in sequences reflecting specific characteristics (e.g. subject, chronology, etc.), the union catalogue functions as a specialized bibliography.

When certain categories of serial material are excluded from the national bibliography but are recorded in a union catalogue (e.g. newspapers) then the union catalogue serves in place of the national bibliography for that material. This can also apply to serials existing before the establishment of the national bibliography.

- *Aid to conservation* The holdings statements of the participants taken together, by showing the degree of completeness of a run of a particular serial, assist in determining what constitutes a complete file of a given title, and in assessing the rarity of a serial. Microform projects may then be initiated to fill gaps in collections.

Where the existence of reprints and microforms are shown, the union catalogue assists in preventing duplication of filming and microform projects.

- *Products of the union catalogue* The union catalogue can appear in various physical forms; e.g. cards, in print, microforms, computerized data file, on-line (see 7.1). In the automated environment records may be retrieved in various sequences (e.g. by subject or participant) and such sub-sets of the total union catalogue file can assist library management purposes (e.g. as a catalogue of a participant's serial collection). In the manual environment, such sub-sets can only be created by duplicating and re-arranging records in the various required sequences.

1.3 Using the union catalogue

As set out above, the union catalogue is usually consulted by

- the librarian as the provider of the serial to the user; or in his capacity as library manager;
- the 'non-librarian' user, a member of the public, research worker, student, etc.

Some union catalogues may not be available for use by non-librarians because the catalogue was designed for internal use only; for example, for the management of an interlending centre.

1.4 Alternative or complementary approaches

It is recognized that alternative means exist for achieving the specific objective of access to serial collections. For example:

- Centralized document supply organized at regional, national or international level, can also be considered, with centralization at one or at several institutions especially adapted to process large numbers of requests (see 2.1).
- Comprehensive data bases, though not designed as union catalogues, can serve some of their functions: for example, to identify and locate serials and provide a library with bibliographic details. Their usefulness as an interlending and acquisition tool, however, is severely curtailed when there is an absence both of holdings statements and of information on restrictions placed by the library on the loan of its collections.

1.5 Characteristics of the union catalogue

The following characteristics can be considered when establishing the scope of the union catalogue, recognizing that the different groups noted below are not mutually exclusive:

1.5.1 Type of library

- *Geographical characteristics* Union catalogues can be intended for use within a particular geographical location; that is, serials found in libraries within a geographical area. For example, a union catalogue can record the serial holdings of:
 - the branches of one library, or
 - libraries within a town or city, or

- libraries within a region or at the sub-national level, or
 - libraries at the national level, or
 - libraries at the international level, either regional (e.g. Latin American, South-east Asian) or worldwide.
- *Specialized libraries* Union catalogues can be intended for use only among a particular type of library user, that is, the use of the serials recorded in the participating libraries can be restricted. For example, the union catalogue can record the holdings of:
- a group of university libraries, or
 - public libraries, or
 - research libraries, or
 - industrial libraries, or
 - special libraries.

Alternatively, the type of participating libraries can be specialized but the use of their holdings need not be restricted to those libraries.

Another possibility is that the catalogue can record the holdings of all types of libraries.

1.5.2 Type of serial

Union catalogues can be general or limited in content, depending on their purpose. Examples of the latter include:

- discipline-oriented (e.g. subject specific areas such as medicine, African history);
- mission-oriented (e.g. groups of users such as children, military forces)
- language;
- area;
- date (e.g. 19th century, current or retrospective);
- type of serial (e.g. newspapers)
- form of material (e.g. microform)
- script (e.g. serials in cyrillic script);
- type of publisher (e.g. official publishing agencies, international organizations);
- place of publication (e.g. national or foreign).

1.5.3 Self-sufficiency

The union catalogue should be self-sufficient in its functions of identifying and locating serial titles and giving information on holdings and on lending availability. The user should not have to refer to other basic bibliographic sources to obtain access to the serials.

2 The decision to establish a union catalogue

2.1 Assessment of the circumstances

The proposal to establish a union catalogue of serials must first be examined in the light of the special objective of the catalogue in relation to existing facilities within the library environment. One major question to be considered is whether the objective of the union catalogue could be better served by other means.

Facilities which may exist within a country, a region or among a group of libraries are not necessarily incompatible with one another or with the existence of a union catalogue and include:

- *schemes of subject specialization* Agreement is reached on a cooperative acquisition policy whereby libraries cover specialized serials on a systematic basis. Such schemes reduce the incidence of unnecessary duplication among libraries, but require careful costing to ensure that allocation of subject areas in terms of serial subscriptions is balanced.
- *central loan/photocopy collections* These concentrate the comprehensive acquisition of serials on one library. In some cases this will be the national library. This solution depends upon strong staffing and a reliable communications system to ensure adequate use.
- *the concentration of 'core' collections in certain libraries* In many countries a high proportion of all the serials required in interlending may be satisfied by a limited number of serial titles. When these titles are held by very few libraries there may not be the need to establish a union catalogue. On the other hand, these few libraries require a substantial serial budget and must expect a greater demand on staff and serial collections.

It is to be recognized that all the above solutions require continuing commitment on the part of the participating libraries, in the same way as does the implementation of a union catalogue proposal. It must be emphasised that any system of resource sharing implies the willingness to co-operate over a period of time.

2.2 Assessment of financial and technical resources

The proposal to establish the union catalogue has also to be examined taking into account the effectiveness of existing arrangements of co-operation and careful consideration of the following questions:

- What is the rationale behind the proposed union catalogue?
Are the participating libraries and the users sufficiently clearly defined?
- To what extent will the existence of a union catalogue result in greater efficiency of access to serial holdings or in more economic use of library resources?
- Will there be adequate resources, already existing or proposed, available to compile and maintain the union catalogue on a continuing basis?
- Will there be sufficient financial and technical commitment on the part of participants to create and maintain the union catalogue?

It is recognized that these questions are relative, in the sense that the answers can only be resolved in the light of particular circumstances. Some of the other factors to be taken into account include: the quality of communications; past record of co-operative activity; the influence of a national centralizing element within the library environment.

3 The establishment of the union catalogue

3.1 Policy

Once the decision to establish a union catalogue has been taken, the following considerations should be borne in mind:

- *Scope and objectives* These need to be clearly defined in relation to possible resources and proposed use. An extensive survey of existing provisions may be required in order to find the optimum scale of operation, before the proposal is submitted to library management and potential participants.
- *Resources and production* These *Guidelines* are independent of the means of production of the union catalogue. It is recognized, however, that an automated library environment facilitates union catalogue maintenance. Nevertheless, a union catalogue can operate effectively with relatively limited resources as a manual system, providing that the scope and objectives are not over-ambitious.
- *Development* Although the objectives of the union catalogue should be within the scope of the resources presently available to implement them, this sort of co-operative venture is usually a long-term project. From the beginning the possibilities for future expansion should be included in the initial planning and should be seriously considered even when resources seem limited. Future development and hospitality to expansion, for example, from a manual to a computerized system or to a revision or extension of the original scope and objectives should be borne in mind.
- *The management structure* That is: where the central editorial work is to take place; to whom the project director reports; financial accountability; the functions of any steering or advisory body. (These are discussed in greater detail in 4.)
- *The participants* The criteria for inviting and the costs of handling participants should be considered. It will be difficult to estimate management costs per participant without detailed information on other costs involved in a particular situation, but it should be borne in mind that when satisfaction rate is high, that is, when most calls, say over 80%, upon the union catalogue are met with success, then the value of additional participants to the union catalogue may make little impact, although the cost of including them is likely to be as great as for existing contributors. What that satisfaction rate will be can only, of course, be established once the union catalogue has been in operation for some time, but care should be taken at the outset to ensure that numbers of participants do not exceed the capacity of the management to handle their input and that participants are committed to the objectives of the union catalogue and are fully informed of the role they will be expected to play and the demands which will be made upon their collections.

3.2 Content

Other policy questions to be considered relate to the content of the union catalogue of serials:

- *Optimization or maximization* A major policy decision is to establish how the objectives of the union catalogue can best be achieved within the limitations of the resources available.

Where comprehensiveness of coverage would strain resources, then coverage on a selective basis, with the aim of achieving an acceptably high satisfaction rate, must be considered. The participation of a library's holdings in the union catalogue and the choice of titles to be incorporated must be justified as an efficient and cost-effective method of getting those serials in most demand to the user: for example, libraries whose collections largely duplicate titles held by other participants might be omitted or titles reported might be confined to current subscriptions.

- *Content* In addition to policy decisions on the inclusion or exclusion of particular categories of serials (see 1.5.2), decisions will be needed on other aspects of content: for example, current and/or retrospective coverage; inclusion of serials in formats other than print; whether or not quality judgements should be made about serials to be included; whether or not restraints on the quantity of records received should be made when resources are limited.
- *Original or derived cataloguing* (derived cataloguing uses data obtained from another file, often in machine-readable form). The resources which are available and the context in which the union catalogue is being prepared as well as the size of the task, will all determine whether it is an economic solution for the union catalogue to make use of records derived, for example, from one or other of the MARC-based services; for example, from OCLC (Online Computer Library Center Inc.), ISDS (International Serials Data System), ZDB (the Zeitschriften-Datenbank) (German Serials Data Base), etc. When the union catalogue is situated in an institution which already uses services such as OCLC for the provision of records for monographs such a solution may be practical and economic. On the other hand, original cataloguing (that is, the serial records made by the participants using the serial itself), for the union catalogue in accordance with agreed rules and standards, may be both more economic and practical. Also when the union catalogue has a strongly specialist orientation, for example, records in a non-roman script, original cataloguing may be preferable to searching a data base, probably in vain, for a record input by another institution. Moreover, when original cataloguing is undertaken, those records may also be made available for derived cataloguing purposes to other libraries.
- *Bibliographic standardization* The rules and standards to be applied in creating the records for the union catalogue and in the organization of those records should be determined as a matter of policy (see 5 and 6). There are advantages in adopting existing national and international bibliographic standards, for example, the adoption of a national or multi-national cataloguing code; international transliteration schemes; and national filing rules. The immediate advantage is that such standards are usually readily and generally available in published form and can be applied and interpreted by both participants and users in a predictable manner. A disadvantage may be that adoption by a particular library where a well-established system is already in operation would involve additional expense and some potential participants might be prevented from providing input because of the cost such a

change would involve. Where resources permit and the importance of a particular library's collection justifies it, a grant to that library to adopt a standard may be considered necessary.

Another advantage of using existing standards is that where shortage of resources coupled with developments in telecommunications make it economic for libraries to participate in network arrangements, which in turn are based on agreed standards, then those libraries having already adopted the standards will be well placed to take advantage of these networking possibilities, in order to continue providing a satisfactory service to their users.

3.3 Legislative framework

The resources and administrative structure required for the establishment of the union catalogue will require agreement among the participants. This agreement may take the form of an informal understanding but is more satisfactorily based on a contract between the parties. Such a contract may have statutory force, especially when the union catalogue is one component of a national library service.

It should be noted, however, that no one model for a legislative framework will be applicable in all countries: there are many differing levels of governmental control over economic and social development and differences between "federal" and "state legislation". There are also variations in legislative style so that what in one country may be expressed in general terms, in another will be set out in detail, step by step, showing how particular objectives are to be reached. Whether the union catalogue is set up by contract or within the framework of the law, there are particular aspects of the operation which may require specification. For example, in relation to the particular roles of the editorial centre which apply whether the union catalogue is part of a larger institution or is a separate body:

- determination of the administrative structure of the editorial centre: its governing body, its membership, powers, responsibilities; and to which superior body it reports;
- determination of the financial basis of the centre; source of its funding; ability to purchase, ability to sell its own products;
- determination of the functions of the centre in relation to the production of the union catalogue; requirement to publish regularly; copyright of the records, etc.
- ability of the centre to enter into relationships with other organizations within the country or elsewhere, for example, for the use of derived records, software packages;
- ability to enter into contracts: buildings, research and development costs; staff employment contracts; determination of salary scales; ability to run staff training courses, etc.

Some of these aspects may well be subsumed by the institution in which the editorial centre is housed and may not be applicable where the union catalogue is limited in size and extent. Nevertheless, however the editorial centre is administered, these factors will need consideration at some level.

In addition, a similar contractual framework is required to set out the responsibilities of the participating libraries in relation to the editorial centre and to each other. Details to be defined and stated formally include: those relating to operational aspects (for example, timescale of contributions; responsibilities for updating; penalty for withdrawal; obligation to lend material) and others relating to possible financial or technical contributions to the editorial centre and/or each other (e.g. financial contributions towards salary of editorial centre staff; secondment of staff; training courses).

3.4 Financial and technical resources

The actual resources required for the operation of the union catalogue will depend upon individual circumstances; for example, the extent to which participants subsidise those activities directly attributable to the union catalogue operation, such as computing costs, common office services, etc. It is anticipated, however, that the more labour-intensive part of the operation will fall upon the editorial centre and an indication of its required resources follows in 4.

4 Organization and management

4.1 First stages

The concept of sharing of serial collections and of information about serials is implicit in the rationale for the union catalogue. It is essentially a co-operative venture which requires careful planning and co-ordination to achieve its objectives.

Before operational work on the compiling of a union catalogue can begin:

- the objectives of the union catalogue should have been established;
- the commitment of the participating libraries to these objectives should have been obtained (see 3.3);
- the editorial centre should have been established, with staff including a project director.
- *Making use of existing resources* The initial stages of compiling the union catalogue present a heavy operational load and the first tasks of the editorial centre in consultation with the participants should be to consider available resources and whether serial records already in existence can be utilized for the union catalogue. In the automated environment, consideration should be given to using records in existing bibliographic data banks and also to the suitability of existing software packages. Wherever possible, automated records should be translatable into a common national MARC Serials format, or into an international exchange format, thus ensuring international compatibility and exchange. Examples of international exchange formats are: UNIMARC,⁽⁶⁾ the Common Communication Format⁽⁷⁾ (in preparation), the UNISIST Reference Manual for Machine-Readable Bibliographic Descriptions⁽⁸⁾ and specifically for serials, the ISDS format.⁽⁹⁾
- *Commitment of participating libraries* Participating libraries should recognize that they may need to modify their routine handling of serials material and to adapt their serial records if necessary to the needs of the editorial centre.

Agreement must be reached on the frequency of reporting of new serial titles or at least the assurance that a procedure exists for new material to be reported regularly. Participating libraries should ensure that adequate resources are made available to maintain a current and precise inventory of holdings, and that revised holdings statements are submitted to the central agency on a regular basis as serial files are strengthened, withdrawn, or replaced by reprints and microforms.

4.2 The editorial centre

- *Location* The editorial centre may be situated as an office or department in one of the participating libraries or it may be separate from them. It is important in considering its location to recognize that to operate effectively the staff of the centre will need to have easy access to a wide range of bibliographic and reference tools including specialized serial bibliographies and data files at both national and international level: for example, the ISDS Register,⁽¹⁰⁾ other union catalogues in published form. Where resources are limited the advantages of the

editorial centre being located within a larger organization include access to the above-mentioned reference material, to other experts in administration of serials, to a large serial collection, and sharing common services for publication and distribution.

- *Staff* The staff appointed to the editorial centre will usually be librarians with experience of serial cataloguing and the tools of serials control. The head of the editorial centre, the project director, will have responsibility for the management of the union catalogue. He will co-ordinate the decision-making procedure and will be responsible for interpreting policy decisions.
- *Functions* The editorial centre controls and maintains the bibliographic content of the union catalogue according to the agreed objectives and available resources. It liaises with the participating libraries. It ensures compatibility and consistency of the catalogue with those standards to which the organisation, of which the editorial centre forms a part, may have committed itself (for example, the use of a common authority file or cataloguing code).

One of its main functions will be to collate the information received, and in order to function effectively it will need information presented to it in as clear and standardized a form as possible. Agreement on the level and presentation of information will therefore be necessary as well as the terms on which the serials reported are to be available for lending, copying or consultation.

In order to keep the participants informed on matters of policy, the project director should establish and maintain a manual of editorial policy, including information on the scope, cataloguing rules and procedures and holdings standards, filing systems, authority files for corporate and geographic names, uniform titles and institutional symbols. This manual may also serve as the internal procedural manual for the participating libraries; alternatively, the editorial centre may prepare and distribute reporting instructions, definitions, information on standards, examples and possibly worksheets.

The editorial centre may also undertake the training of the appropriate personnel from the participating libraries; or may lend staff to carry out work at the participating libraries.

The editorial centre may be responsible for the verification of bibliographic information submitted, either from the serial itself, a surrogate (photocopy of the title-page and preliminary pages), or a reliable record from an existing source. Its aim will be the consolidation and editing of all contributed bibliographic data into a single, comprehensive, consistent and up-to-date record for each serial title, with resolution of any problems arising from the use of different formats, cataloguing codes and policies on change of title. Problem lists may be sent to participating libraries for further checking, verification, or reconciliation of discrepancies.

The duties of the staff and the editorial centre may also include the proof-reading of the master file for errors, duplications and inconsistencies; creating the desired arrangement of entries;

supervising the production of the union catalogue in the preferred media, accompanied by appropriate explanatory material; the publication and distribution of printed and fiche editions, including the deposit of copies with the national bibliographic agency; the arrangements for extraction of data from and transmission of data to, other serial data bases.

5 The content of the bibliographic record

5.1 Bibliographic information

The use of standardization at all levels, whether the use of a single manner of notification, a standard worksheet, or the application of existing national or international standards, results in a more efficient editorial centre. Efficiency is achieved by accelerating the incorporation of changes in holdings and additional titles and by facilitating the matching of duplicate entries and the editing of records for publication.

In establishing the bibliographic content of the records, the following points should be taken into consideration:

- Serials are characterized by their bibliographic instability. Changing bibliographic elements, for example, title, place of publishing, language(s) of publication or subject matter, make the aim of reducing descriptive cataloguing to a minimum to avoid costly re-cataloguing of inessential elements particularly attractive.

A minimum set of data elements of the bibliographic content of the record, that is, a short serial description, consists of those elements which serve to identify the serial (for example, in some cases the ISSN and the key title could be sufficient). In the absence of an international standard for a minimum set of data elements for the bibliographic record of a serial for use in the union catalogue, existing national and international practices should be examined for their suitability for use by the participating libraries. International recommendations for the creation of bibliographic records include the *ISDS Guidelines*⁽⁹⁾ (to be replaced by the *ISDS Manual*) and *ISBD(S)* (International Standard Bibliographic Description for Serials.)⁽¹¹⁾

Supplementary data elements to those necessary to identify the serial; for example, subject classification, country code, language code or audience code, may enhance the records and enable the catalogue to serve other purposes than the identification and location of known titles of serials (see 1.2). However, the inclusion of supplementary data elements adds to costs and labour, especially at the level of the editorial work necessary to achieve consistency and should, therefore, only be included when it is agreed that resources are available for extra work and that there is a need for the supplementary services thereby provided. Where the union catalogue uses a sub-set of a fuller record and this fuller record is also available to users, then the supplementary services may be relinquished by the union catalogue.

- To facilitate comprehension of information across language barriers the use of symbols might be considered to accompany notes on the history of the serial connecting earlier and later titles: for example, the arrow:

from left to right $\longrightarrow$: continued by
from right to left $\longleftarrow$: supersedes

These symbols could be included in an international standard. Internationally accepted MARC tags already exist for machine manipulation of this information: for example, the use of tags in the ISDS record in machine-readable and in printed form where tag 780 indicates former title.

- When the decision is taken to formulate rules for the creation of bibliographic records for a union catalogue of serials, then it is useful to keep the format of the rules within the framework of the national cataloguing rules.

It should be recognized that original cataloguing (see 3.2) is time-consuming both for the participating libraries and for the editorial centre, when the latter checks material for consistency and accuracy. The participating libraries should, therefore, agree to examine the possibility of using as source material:

- records or sub-sets of records produced by the ISDS; or
- records or sub-sets of records produced by the national bibliographic agency for the national bibliography; or
- records or sub-sets of records produced by other reputable cataloguing agencies; for example, other union catalogues, bibliographic data bases, records of the largest of the participating libraries.

5.2 Holding and lending information

The use of a standard presentation of library codes and holdings is strongly recommended. National standards for holdings statements should be used where they exist. A recommendation to develop an international standard for a holdings statement is likely to be presented to ISO/TC46, and in such a standard the development of holdings statements at different levels of detail might be examined. Existing national codes for libraries can be made available for international use by adding the two letter Country codes from *ISO 3166, Codes for the representation of names of countries*.⁽¹²⁾

Indication of the exact terms of availability of a participating library's serials is important. Although the establishment of the union catalogue has been based on a generally agreed policy of making the serial collections of the participating libraries available to users, the exact terms of availability may vary among the libraries and may depend on the format or age of a particular serial. Examples of restrictions placed upon availability are: for consultation only; limited photocopying facilities; photocopies only; "last resort" lending only (that is, the library will only lend if all other possibilities have been exhausted).

6 Compilation and maintenance

The layout of the bibliographic records by which material is notified to the editorial centre is not necessarily the same as the form in which it is presented in the catalogue. However, whenever these two forms can be made to coincide, then the workload of the editorial centre will be proportionately lightened.

6.1 Compilation

Three basic methods of compilation can be identified:

- participating libraries submit existing serial records which are then edited and cumulated at the editorial centre. This method permits participants to copy their records in whatever form is most convenient to them, but increases the editorial centre's workload, especially if several forms of notification are allowed, e.g. cards, accession lists, work sheets, tapes.
- the use of the existing data bases from which the editorial centre can extract ready-made records. The first method above can be used in conjunction with this method, and as the union catalogue itself grows, so it will be possible to match new notifications against existing records. This method lends itself to minimum reporting on the part of participating libraries, for example by ISSN.
- participating libraries submit records created especially for the union catalogue. This method allows the greatest degree of editorial control and consistency, but the workload falls principally upon the participating libraries.

- 6.1.1 *Arrangement* The arrangement of the union catalogue should facilitate rapid access and efficient use. The preferred print or display arrangement for the main sequence is usually *alphabetical*. Certain categories of materials present particular problems which may be best solved by separate listing. Examples of possible exceptions are catalogues devoted wholly to newspapers or to government serial publications. Union catalogues devoted wholly to government serial publications are more usually arranged by *territorial authority*.⁽¹³⁾ In the case of newspapers the following factors can influence both bibliographic and holdings data: because of the fragility of the material, damaged or disintegrating back issues may be destroyed; for the same reason and also because their bulk creates storage problems, they are likely targets for reprints and microform editions; the practice of printing early and late daily editions, and of modifying the content to give regional variations. These factors create problems when matching library holdings. Where union catalogues are devoted wholly to newspapers the usual arrangement is *geographical* as the user is frequently seeking information connected with a certain area and may not know the precise title of the newspaper, his search may also be hampered by a multitude of commonly-used titles. Where the arrangement of the union catalogue is other than alphabetical, then additional access by title must also be provided.

In union catalogues which include serial records in differing scripts, for example, a national union list of serials in a multi-language, multi-script country, the decision may be taken whether to include all records in one sequence or to have separate sequences for the records in each script. It is possible to include the records of serials in a number of scripts in one sequence when:

- the sequence itself has a special characteristic: for example, it is arranged in classified order in accordance with a specified classification scheme; or
- the 'filing title' of each serial record is given in transliterated form: for example, when the serial records have been extracted from the ISDS file (see 3.2), the ISDS key title, which serves as the 'filing title', is always provided in a romanized form (see *ISDS Guidelines*).⁽⁹⁾

From the point of view of the user, both librarian and non-librarian, there are advantages in providing the serial records in their original script and in maintaining different sequences for each script.

- *Register index format* This computerized catalogue comprises a master register of bibliographic records in random order by register number (a running number), plus continuously cumulating indexes by title, corporate body headings, ISSN, and possibly subject headings, with brief descriptive data in one or more of the indexes. The regularly cumulating indexes replace the need to cumulate the full records (for example, the ISDS and CONSER⁽¹⁴⁾ systems), and may result in publishing savings.

Unfortunately, a double search is needed for reference and cataloguing librarians, bibliographers and researchers who need fuller bibliographic information than may be provided in the 'mini' record in the indexes. These users first have to find the register number in the index in order to consult the fuller data. The register-index is also wasteful of space because of the repetition of some bibliographic data and possibly the repetition of library location and holdings statements in both the register and the indexes. Moreover, a practical sub-set of bibliographic information with holdings attached is often preferable to an overfull master record and an over-abbreviated index.

- *Subject access* As indicated above, the principal arrangement of, or access to, a union catalogue of serials is usually alphabetical, and is best suited to serve patrons concerned with the physical address of a specific volume and issue of a title as cited in a reference, a footnote, a bibliography or an index. Generally the unit requiring subject control is the article, paper or report contained in a serial, rather than the serial itself.

There may be a pre-determined need for subject approach to a union catalogue of serials, to further subject specialization plans or for other purposes, which justifies the time and resources required to provide it. In such cases it must still be remembered that this access also requires up-dating to reflect the changing subject content of serials over the years and the evolution of disciplines.

There is at present no internationally-accepted standard for subject identification which covers the content of serials ranging from the very general to the very specific, and takes into account national variations in cultural and linguistic traditions. Possibilities for a subject approach include the use of subject headings; classification schemes in detailed sequence or broad subject divisions; coding; and retrieval by each significant word and by any combination of significant words in the data base (key-word indexes and key-word searching). Machine-readable files offer more possibilities for access by subject, including the use of PRECIS⁽¹⁵⁾ with its detailed controlled vocabulary and the development of multilingual thesauri to facilitate international exchange.

- 6.1.2 *Access points* Access points (see 1.1) other than title can include, for example, corporate bodies associated with the serial; ISSN and related key-title; subject headings; key-words; cross-references; place of publication. These should be provided by means of indexes, or (with the exception of ISSN) be integrated into the main sequence with the aim of giving multiple approaches appropriate to the type of serials covered and aiding the user who has at hand an imprecise title citation. Where the union catalogue is created in an automated environment, the creation of multiple access points creates less work than in a manual environment.
- 6.1.3 *Filing system* In order to use the union catalogue successfully, the filing arrangement must be understood: As yet there is no international agreement on standard filing practices although a draft standard *ISO/DIS 7154 Part 1 - Documentation - Bibliographic filing principles*,⁽¹⁶⁾ is under consideration. Problems related to filing will arise in both manual and computer-aided union catalogues, and will be complicated when records in several languages are integrated.

Because of current differences in practices, it is considered useful to include, when the union catalogue is arranged in different sequences, the maximum of possible cross-references as an aid to the user. The practices followed should be explained in the Introduction and examples provided.

In union catalogues in printed form, multiple type-faces, complex spacing and prescribed punctuation, can be used in order to distinguish the entries in the catalogue and the elements of the records: for example, filing titles in bold type, cross references in italics, thus aiding the user. However, it must be noted that such typographical refinements add to costs of printing and the difficulties of proof reading and maintaining accuracy.

6.2 Maintenance

The union catalogue best serves its purpose as a location tool when it is kept up-to-date with special attention paid to the inclusion of new titles. The participating libraries and editorial centre should commit themselves to providing complete and accurate inventories reflecting new, changed and deleted records (see 3.3). Both bibliographic and holdings data are susceptible to frequent change, not only because the elements are volatile, but also because reprints and microform editions may become available. Frequent updating is also important in the case of deteriorating materials such as newspapers (see 6.1.1), where holdings statements do not remain stable for long periods of time.

It should be remembered, however, that up-dating a file is a labour intensive process, the scheduling of which must be included in preliminary planning. Machine-readable systems facilitate up-dating. Microfiche is a relatively economical support for frequently up-dated editions. On-line systems enable data to be up-dated and made available immediately to those with access to the data-base. Each print or microfiche edition should ideally be complete in itself and whenever possible, supplements should be avoided because they add to the number of sequences for the user to check. The card catalogue shares an advantage with the machine-readable data base: both can be kept up to date without manually re-sequencing the entries.

Where manual methods are used, techniques should be avoided which add to the difficulty of up-dating, such as numbering the entries, or using numbers within entries and indexes which have to be re-sequenced in the next edition.

Frequency of printed issues will depend upon the size of the union catalogue, and the professional, technical and financial resources available to prepare the records and edit the input. The project director should make provision for new editions at frequent intervals and endeavour to minimize the gap between data collection and publication. The date of the contributions in respect of holdings is more significant than the date of publication of the union catalogue.

In taking account of the universal use of union catalogues of serials, and of the many types of agencies which compile them, it is apparent that there are great advantages in establishing some international uniformity not only in the contents but in the physical and editorial lay-out of printed and microfiche editions, and display in on-line systems.

7 Production and publication

7.1 The physical form of the catalogue

The information contained in a union catalogue can be made available for consultation in various ways: card catalogue, printed catalogue or machine-readable data base giving access via a terminal, printed or microform products. When considering the physical form the union catalogue should take it may be useful to consider the following advantages and disadvantages:

Card catalogue

- can constantly be kept up-to-date by interfiling new information without re-sequencing the file. (This implies that backlogs of cards awaiting interfiling are not allowed to accumulate.)
- the basic materials for the creation of the card catalogue are inexpensive;
- a highly sophisticated infrastructure is not necessary to the library;
- possible access points in a card catalogue in theory are unlimited; in practice, references and added entries are limited by the amount of work required to produce them and by the physical amount of space they take;
- it is possible to produce a printed catalogue from a card catalogue and vice versa, recognizing that this is a labour-intensive process;
- the card catalogue is bulky in size;
- access is limited to those on site;
- information cannot be transferred easily;
- duplicate copies of the catalogue, to protect the information from loss or destruction, do not exist;
- changes to cataloguing rules present major problems for the coherence of the catalogue.

Printed catalogue

- the printed catalogue is portable;
- it may be produced in multiple copies and widely distributed;
- it cannot be kept up to date unless derived from machine-readable data;
- when frequent supplements are produced, this involves the researcher in multiple searches;
- the number of access points is limited by space and resources;
- the librarian may have less control over the technical details of the production of the printed catalogue than a card catalogue.

Machine-readable data base

- the machine-readable data base can be kept up to date. (This implies that a backlog of updated information waiting to be processed should not accumulate.)
- information can be stored compactly;

- the tape of the data base can be duplicated and widely distributed;
- changes to cataloguing rules can sometimes be accommodated by writing programs to change elements of the record automatically;
- card catalogues, printed catalogues, microform catalogues can all be produced from the data base; in addition the data base can be consulted on-line or off-line;
- direct consultation of data base only available to those with access to a terminal; however the numbers of terminals can be increased depending on needs and resources;
- if so programmed, can admit searches via a terminal, not only by access points such as date, medium, language or place of publication, but by a combination of these factors. Similarly, can admit searching by keyword;
- a highly sophisticated infrastructure is necessary to the library;
- the system is particularly vulnerable to power shortages and mechanical faults;
- the initial investment in machinery is considerable;
- the maintenance of the machinery is costly;
- input into the data base is not always in the hands of the librarian and mechanical problems of processing information may arise.

Microfiche

- microfiche is compact and lightweight;
- the support is inexpensive to produce and duplicate;
- it can be updated frequently when derived from machine-readable data;
- it can be distributed cheaply through the postal system;
- special apparatus is needed for viewing;
- where dependent upon a machine-readable data base, i.e. Computer Output Microform (COM), see also related points above;
- where dependent upon filming card or printed catalogues, see also under those headings.

7.2 Introduction

Whatever physical form the union catalogue takes, each edition should contain introductory material to help the various kinds of users. The *Introduction* should be complete and not require consultation of similar material in previous editions. All information should be up-dated as necessary.

In order to clarify the contents of the union catalogue and assist the user, the *Introduction* should outline the editorial policy and explain the following:

- objectives, potential audience, and expected functions;
- scope: inclusions, exclusions;
- frequency;
- arrangement;

- filing system, with examples (see 6.1.3);
- cataloguing practices, with examples including:
 - choice of entry; form of entry; title abbreviations,
 - policy on changes in titles and/or corporate responsibility,
 - romanization schemes, including local modifications or exceptions, and display of the romanization tables,
 - subject system, if used, with outline,
 - indexes and other access features;
- special terminology and abbreviations used;
- holdings system;
- a list of symbols of participating institutions, with full names, addresses, telephone and telex numbers, and an alphabetical listing of the names of participating institutions with their symbols.

It may be possible under the last point to include the loan and photocopying policies of each institution, or other indication of availability. Such information should be obtained directly from the contributing libraries, and, once included, should be kept up to date.

It is particularly helpful for the *Introduction* to include one or more complete sample entries with each element in the entry explained. Where appropriate, for example, a country with more than one official language, the *Introduction* should be repeated in its entirety in all necessary languages.

7.3 Layout of printed edition

The following recommendations, based closely on the Recommendations for the presentation and frequency of the printed national bibliography made at the International Congress on National Bibliographies, held at Unesco, Paris 1977, (17) are made with regard to the appearance and arrangement of *printed* editions, irrespective of the method of production:

- an international paper size (preferably A4) should be used;
- the layout and typography of the cover and title-page should be clear and unambiguous, and should include the following: title of the union catalogue, edition designation, place of publication, name of the publisher, date of publication, ISSN (on the top right-hand corner of the front cover and on the title-page);
- the verso of the title-page should include the following: copyright information, details of availability and price, details of editing, details of printing, cataloguing-in-publication entry;
- an introduction should be provided (see 7.2). It is also helpful when this *Introduction* is repeated in each printed volume for editions of union catalogues which consist of more than one physical volume;
- the main body of the text;
- indexes if necessary.

7.4 Microform editions

The Computer Output Microform (COM) union catalogue as well as those produced by step and repeat cameras should follow pertinent standards and avoid individual idiosyncrasies in compilation and presentation. The International Organization for Standardization is working on the necessary international standards. (18)

Until standards for physical characteristics, headers, page and record formats, indexing, image-quality and legibility control, etc., become available through the work of the appropriate ISO committees of experts, adherence to the following principles is recommended:

- The fiche edition itself should be given adequate bibliographic identification on a separate title-frame.
- The microfiche headers should be eye-readable and include the following bibliographic information: ISSN, title of fiche edition, edition of statement and date, type of sequence (title, issuing body, etc.), span covered (first and last entries on each fiche), number of each fiche in the set.
- Multiple sequences should be explained in the *Introduction* and should be physically differentiated, for example, by the use of coloured headers or film.
- The *Introduction* should be on a separate fiche, preferably including all material which would appear in a printed edition, but giving at least the essentials if space is limited.
- Index fiche should give a brief explanation of the indexing system.
- A separate eye-readable conventional print *Introduction* or *User's Manual* should be provided to prevent user difficulties in referring back to an explanatory fiche while viewing another in equipment lacking a dual carrier, and to offset any space limitations for introductory material on the fiche itself.
- The reduction ratio should be specified.

In other respects the COM edition should coincide with the printed equivalent.

7.5 Direct consultation of data base

An on-line or off-line union catalogue of serials offers the possibility of continuous file modification. The use of search keys, and key term and phrase searching, offers an alternative to traditional access to bibliographic data.

A separate *User's Manual* should be provided which contains the following:

- The same information as for printed and fiche editions, including an explanation of all types of data displayed on the screen.
- System-specific information and search aids: specifications for communicating with the computer; summary of operator commands/requests; summary of display options available; summary of search keys available; techniques of efficient searching, step by step; explanation of computer responses; sample searches; list of any codes, abbreviations, etc., used; definition of subject scheme used, or list of subjects if unique to the system.

Conclusion

The nature of serials, their fragility compared to monographs, the susceptibility to change of their bibliographic characteristics, together with certain factors of serials management; the acquiring of back copies to complete serial files, acquiring reprint or microform editions of serials, disposing of out-dated files, acquiring new serial titles, cause any listing of the serials collection of a library to become out-dated in time.

Although a union catalogue which cannot be updated due to lack of resources will retain some use for many years, the ideal union catalogue will be updated as frequently as the participating libraries feel to be appropriate with regard to the above-mentioned factors.

The obligation to update the union catalogue can be turned to advantage in that the catalogue can be modified if necessary to meet the changing needs of participants and users and in response to changing resources and to new technical and bibliographic developments. In order to ascertain how well the union catalogue is fulfilling its role the opinions of those it serves must be sought. This may be done by circulating questionnaires, through interviews with users, or through policy meetings with participating libraries.

Decisions to enlarge or to reduce the scope of the catalogue, or to change the content or layout of the record of the serials should be publicized by an explanatory note in the introduction.

The union catalogue, whether produced manually or as a product of a machine-readable data base, is a finding tool which may either be used alone or form one element in a series of searches to locate a particular serial title. The user may have taken a reference from a citation in another work and may have consulted library catalogues and reference works to obtain the necessary information for his interlibrary loan request. This search will be facilitated wherever the information sought is presented in a uniform and easily recognisable way, complementing the information in other catalogues and promoting the universal availability of publications.

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- 11 IFLA Joint Working Group on the International Standard Bibliographic
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- 12 International Organization for Standardization. *ISO 3166-1981 Codes for*
the representation of names of countries. - 2nd edition. - vi, 49 p.
- 13 Territorial authority: a corporate body that exercises government functions,
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constituent states and federal units and their regional or local units.
- 14 CONSER, Conversion of Serials Project : a machine-readable data base of
bibliographic information on serial titles.
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ISO 2708-1976 *Microcopying - Transparent A6 size microfiche of variable*
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ISO 5126 *Computer Output Microfiche*
The ISO Standing Committee ISO/TC46/SC6 is working on a standard microfiche
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ISO/DIS 5123 *Documentation - Headers for microfiches of monographs*
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